

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

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R 110745Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2827
INFO DSAA WASHINGTON
DA WASHINGTON
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
USDAO NDJAMEANA CHADE

C O N F I D E N T I A L YAOUNDE 3484

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, CM
SUBJ: ASSESSMENT OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FY 1979;
US INTERESTS

REF: (A) STATE 133136, (B) YAOUNDE 3440

1. SUMMARY. THIS TELEGRAM PRESENTS THE EMBASSY'S RESPONSE TO
PARA 3 REFTEL A IN TERMS OF US INTERESTS SERVED BY MAINTAINING
A SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP WITH CAMEROON. YAOUNDE REFTEL
PROBIDES A LISTING OF CAMEROON (GURC) MILITARY EQUIPMENT NEEDS AND
OTHER TELEGRAMS WILL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFO IN RESPONSE TO
REFTEL A. END SUMMARY.

2. BASIC US INTERESTS ARE PROMOTING A CONTINUATION OF THE
MODERATE, PROWESTERN STANCE OF CAMEROON WHICH SUPPORTS MANY
WESTERN POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL FORA, ENCOURAGING CAMEROONIAN
EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPMENT BY ASSISTING THEM TO MEET THEIR PRIORITY
MILITARY EQUIPMENT NEEDS THROUGH FMS CREDITS AND NOT DIVERTING
SCARCE RESOURCES FOR LARGE-SCALE MILITARY PURCHASES; RESPONDING
FAVORABLY TO A DIRECT REQUEST MADE FOR ASSISTANCE OVER ONE
YEAR AGO TO MEET WHAT GURC CONSIDERS TO BE EXTERNAL THREATS TO
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THEIR INTERNAL STABILITY AND FOSTERING THE CONTINUANCE OF
CAMEROONIAN LIBERAL INVESTMENT CLIMATE WHICH WILL INSURE
CONTINUED US ACCESS TO CAMEROONIAN RAW MATERIALS AND MARKETS.
CONNECTED WITH THE MODERATE STANCE TAKEN BY CAMEROON IN INTERNA-
TIONAL FORA IS THE INFLUENCE WHICH THE COUNTRY EXERTS DUE TO THE
STABILITY WHICH IT BRINGS TO THE REGION, OWING IN LARGE MEASURE TO
ITS INTERNAL STABILITY, WHICH CONTRASTS WITH INSTABILITY AND MORE

RADICAL ACTIONS OF ITS NEIGHBORS. THIS IS REFLECTED IN THE IMPORTANT POSITIONS WHICH CAMEROON AND CAMEROONIANS OCCUPY IN VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL GROUPS; I.E. PAST TWO SECRETARIES GENERAL OF OU, CIEC, CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE I OF LOS, VARIOUS OAU RECONCILIATION COMMITTEES, ETC. FINALLY, WHILE THERE IS NO DIRECT OVERT LINKAGE, THERE SHOULD BE RECOGNITION THAT A CONTINUING SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP IS AN IMPORTANT LEVER IN ENCOURAGING FAVORABLE GURC CONSIDERATION OF OUR REQUEST FOR A WATTS BASE STATION AND, IF AND WHEN PERMISSION IS GRANTED, A VALUABLE FOREIGN POLICY TOOL TO DEMONSTRATE OUR INCREASED COMMONALITY OF INTEREST IN ENCOURAGING STABILITY IN THE AREA.

3. THE PRESENT SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WAS INSTITUTED AS A RESULT OF A GURC REQUEST IN JULY 1976 FOR SUPPORT IN OVERCOMING CERTAIN EQUIPMENT SHORTAGES IN ORDER THAT THE GURC WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO MEET PERCEIVED EXTERNAL THREATS. AFTER REFINING THE ORIGINAL REQUEST, IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT A \$10 MILLION FMS CREDIT PROGRAM WOULD MEET THE HIGHEST PRIORITY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS. FIVE MILLION DOLLARS WAS IN THE CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION FOR FY 1977. SINCE THEN, LARGELY AS A RESULT OF MILITARY MANEUVERS HELD FROM MARCH 28 TO APRIL 24, THE GURC THINKING ON ITS MILITARY EQUIPMENT PRIORITIES HAS BEEN MODIFIED. WHILE PREVIOUS STRATEGY WAS TO PROVIDE FOR A MOBILE STRIKE FORCE OF VC-150'S, IT WAS FOUND THAT THESE VEHICLES HAVE A LIMITED MISSION IN THE DENSELY FORESTED HILLY COUNTRY IN THE SOUTHERN AND SOUTHEASTERN REGION, WHICH IS CONFIDENTIAL

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DEEMED TO BE THE AREA OF GREATEST POTENTIAL THREAT FROM EXTERNAL AGGRESSION. THEREFORE, PRESENT PLANNING CALLS FOR STANDARDIZATION OF INFANTRY WEAPONS SYSTEMS, THE MEANS OF RECOVERING DISABLED VC-150'S, A RELIABLE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, AND ADEQUATE TRANSPORT TO MOVE MEN AND MATERIAL. THESE PRIORITIES ARE REFLECTED IN REFTEL B WHICH PRIORITY LISTS EACH ITEM. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE TOTAL PACKAGE WILL COST SOMEWHERE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$20 MILLION. SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, SOME OF THE EQUIPMENT WILL PROBABLY EVENTUALLY BE PURCHASED COMMERCIALY BY THE GURC. HOWEVER, SINCE THERE IS ONLY AN ESTIMATED \$4 MILLION IN THE CURRENT BUDGET FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES, IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT IT WOULD BE SOME TIME BEFORE THE GURC COULD ACQUIRE THESE ITEMS THROUGH COMMERCIAL PURCHASE.

4. WHILE I RECOMMEND THAT THE FMS CREDIT PROGRAM SHOULD BE FUNDED FOR AN ADDITIONAL YEAR AT THE PRESENT LEVEL OF \$5 MILLION TO DEMONSTRATE OUR WILLINGNESS TO RESPOND FAVORABLY TO A BASICALLY FRIENDLY COUNTRY'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN HAVING THE MEANS TO MEET A PERCEIVED THREAT TO ITS SECURITY. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT ANY DECISION WITH RESPECT TO FUTURE FUNDING SHOULD BE DEFERRED UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THERE IS AN INCREASED RECOGNITION OF COMMONALITY

OF OUR INTERESTS ON THE PART OF THE GURC BY THEIR ACCEEDING TO
OUR REQUEST FOR A WATTS BASE STATEION. PLEASE SHOW THIS MESSAGE TO
AMBASSADOR SMYTHE FOR HER CONCURRANCE.
MITHOEFER

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